

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5249

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 07244

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: PUSYON BISAYAS INVENT AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR

- CANDIDACY IN REGION VII

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM CONSUL CEBU:

1. SUMMARY. POST-ELECTION DISCUSSIONS WITH PUSYON BISAYAS (PB) CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL OBSERVERS IN CEBU INDICATE THAT THE PB AS A CAMPAIGN TACTIC ATTEMPTED TO CREATE IMPRESSION IN POPULAR OPINION THAT PB ENJOYED AMERICAN SUPPORT IN APRIL 7 REGION VII INTERIM BATASAN PAMBANSA ELECTION. PB SLATE CHAIRMAN WAS CALLED TO MALACANANG BY PRESIDENT MARCOS TO EXPLAIN A MEETING HE HAD WITH U.S. CONSUL AND POL COUNS. CAMPAIGN TACTIC MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO MARCOS' ALLEGATIONS OF FOREIGN "MEDDLING" IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY.

2. PSEUDO-OPPOSITIONIST PUSYON BISAYAS SLATE, WHICH MAY HAVE SWEEPED REGION VII IBP ELECTION (RESULTS ARE NOT OFFICIAL) APPARENTLY CONDUCTED VERY EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN IN VISAYAN LANGUAGE APPEALING FOR VOTES BY IMPLYING PB ENJOYED AMERICAN SUPPORT. CONSULATE WAS AWARE DURING EARLY STAGES OF CAMPAIGN THAT PB WAS TELLING RALLY CROWDS THAT MARCOS WAS ONLY HOLDING ELECTIONS BECAUSE OF AMERICAN
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PRESSURE, BUT CONSULATE LOW PROFILE FOR BULK OF CAMPAIGN PREVENTED FIRST-HAND EXPOSURE TO PB RALLIES OR PROBING CONTACTS FOR DETAILS OF PB VISAYAN SPEECHES.

3. IN POST-ELECTION DISCUSSION WITH CONSUL AND DCM, HOWEVER, PB SLATE LEADER VALENTIN LEGASPI ADMITTED GLEEFULLY THAT ATTEMPTING TO IMPLY AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR

PB WAS A KEY ELEMENT IN HIS CAMPAIGN STRATEGY. LEGASPI CLAIMED THAT VIRTUALLY EVERY PB CAMPAIGN SPEECH ALLUDED TO THE AMERICANS AS PRESSURING MARCOS TO HOLD THE ELECTIONS. PB SPEAKERS ENCOURAGED VOTERS TO "HAVE THE COURAGE" TO VOTE FOR PB BECAUSE OF THIS ALLEGED IMPLICIT AMERICAN SUPPORT, IN SOME CASES EVEN IMPLYING VAGUELY THAT THE AMERICANS "WOULD COME" IF DIFFICULTIES ENSUED. ASKED IF THIS APPROACH DID NOT INSULT FILIPINO NATIONALISM, LEGASPI REJECTED THE THOUGHT, EVEN INSISTING THAT THE MAJORITY OF FILIPINOS WOULD WELCOME AN AMERICAN TAKEOVER* HE NOTED THAT PB CANDIDATE CABANGBANG HAD BEGUN HIS POLITICAL CAREER BY HEADING A VISAYAN "PHILIPPINE STATE-HOOD" MOVEMENT.

4. LEGASPI VOLUNTEERED THAT HE HAD BEEN SUMMONED BY PRESIDENT MARCOS TO EXPLAIN WHY HE HAD MET WITH U.S. CONSUL AND POL COUNS, BUT DID NOT TELL US WHAT HE TOLD MARCOS. (CONSUL AND POL COUNS MET WITH PB AND KBL CANDIDATES IN CEBU AT BEGINNING OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN.) HE SAID HE WAS SUMMONED TO MALACANANG AGAIN LATER IN THE CAMPAIGN, BUT OFFERED NO DETAILS.

5. COMMENT: LEGASPI, WHO WAS MAKING HIS FIRST APPEARANCE IN AN ELECTION, CLEARLY THINKS HE FOUND A KEY TO VICTORY BY INVENTING AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR HIS SLATE'S CANDIDACY. THE TACTIC MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED SOMEWHAT TO MARCOS' CONFIDENTIAL

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ALLEGATIONS OF FOREIGN "MEDDLING" IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. END COMMENT. STULL

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Message Attributes

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